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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

*OR 91 Presidential
Classroom for
Young Americans*

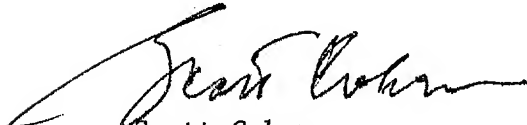
March 22, 1979

Mr. Herb Hetu
Public Relations Officer
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D. C. 20505

Dear Mr. Hetu:

I thought you might be glad to have the enclosed clipping from the Decatur (Ill.) Herald in which a high school student says that her tour of the CIA in Langley had changed her attitude toward the Agency.

Sincerely,



Scott Cohen

SC:nc
enclosure

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'Little people' count in D.C., girl sees

By Al Stamborski

A firsthand look at government operations in the nation's capital has given a St. Teresa High School student a new perspective on the American political scene.

Lisa Lawrence says she found out that the so-called little people really do have a voice in Washington, D.C. The 16-year-old junior says her trip also "pretty much" convinced her that the Central Intelligence Agency isn't the bunch of bad guys as portrayed in recent years.

Miss Lawrence of 2325 Central Drive is the daughter of Karen J. Lawrence of Decatur and A.W. Lawrence of Warrensburg. She was the only student from Macon County to recently attend a one-week Presidential Classroom for Young Americans.

The program is sponsored by a non-profit, nonpartisan group of the same name.

"They're trying to show you that you can have a part of what's going on. You don't have to just sit there and go along with everything," says Miss Lawrence. She and the approximately 400 other



Lisa Lawrence

students in her "classroom" visited government offices, heard speeches by an ambassador, newsmen and government officials, and discussed among

themselves such issues as the Equal Rights Amendment and China-U.S. relations.

"Probably the trip to the CIA was the most interesting part," says Miss Lawrence.

The buses that took the students to the agency's headquarters were escorted by police, she recalls.

Once there, an officer explained the role of the CIA. "He said it's not really romantic or glamorous as expected," she says.

However, the souvenir given the students somewhat belies that. Each student was given a sample of the paper spies use to write on. If necessary, the paper can be eaten.

Since she wasn't hungry at the time, Miss Lawrence saved her souvenir. "Some day at lunch at school, I'll say 'Are you guys really hungry?'"

Miss Lawrence says her visit to the CIA changed her opinion of the organization.

"I always thought of them as the bad guys," she says. But her trip "pretty much convinced me" otherwise, she said.

Along with other students from Illinois, Miss Lawrence visited Rep. Edward Madigan, R-Lincoln, and Sen. Charles Percy. Sen. Adlai Stevenson was busy in a meeting, she said.

Miss Lawrence says she saw files in their offices on such local issues as the Decatur water problem and the proposed closing of Chanute Air Force Base in Rantoul.

"I found out things do matter," she says.

Miss Lawrence's trip was not without its lighter moments. She went to a concert at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and toured various city sites, including the White House.

She vouches that Amy Carter's tree house is no architectural wonder. "It's only about five feet off the ground."

Miss Lawrence recommends the program to her fellow students.

"You can read about government in a book, but it's better to go there and see it in action," she assured.

While Miss Lawrence paid her own expenses, she said most students usually are sponsored or get some type of scholarship.